

## Mission Statement

The Miami-Dade County Asian-American Advisory Board was established on July 22, 1997. Its mission is to serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of County Commissioners, The County Administration, the community, and all agencies and persons in Miami-Dade County Florida, with respect to matters pertaining to the Asian community of Miami-Dade County.

The 26 members of the Asian-American Advisory Board are appointed by the Board of County Commissioners to serve on a volunteer basis. Membership on the Board reflects the diverse cultures and ethnic backgrounds represented in Miami-Dade county's growing Asian-American community, and to advance the interest of the Asian-American community. Other duties of the Board include, promoting the activities, and participation of Asian-Americans in civic, cultural, commercial and community affairs; promoting positive images of Asian-Americans and their many contributions to society, promoting the cultural heritage of Asian-Americans and eliminating ignorance and bigotry towards Asian-Americans. The Board meets regularly on the second Tuesday of every month, with some scheduling changes due to holidays. All meetings are open to the public.

The Asian-American Advisory Board is a part of Office of Community Relations under the County Manager's Office. Miami-Dade County provides staff and support to the Board. The Board also, has established a trust fund with the County to accept monetary contributions to help support its activities.



Alex Penelas  
Mayor



## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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District 10

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District 12

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District 13

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County Attorney

Miami-Dade County provides equal access and equal opportunity in employment and services and does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

"It is the policy of Miami-Dade County to comply with all of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act."

## ASIAN-AMERICAN ADVISORY BOARD

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## Asia AT A GLANCE GREETINGS







A simple hello marks the beginning of a fruitful or a fateful relationship. Many personal unions, business partnerships, and political alliances often begin or end with the impressions made during the first encounter.

The proverbial statement: the first impression is the last impression, couldn't be more true about anything as it is about acknowledging your contact in the first meeting.

# Asian

## GREETING & GESTURES

Greetings are the first and perhaps, the most impressionable marks you make on someone you meet. It sets the tone of your relationship. Therefore, it is very important to know how to say Hello - and say it properly.

While most educated Asians understand Western forms of greetings, it is good for others to learn more about Asian-Americans. They are the fastest growing community in our own country and our largest trade partner overseas. It always makes a good impression and pleases your contacts if you can demonstrate a touch of appreciation and respect for their culture in your expressions, especially in your greeting.

Greetings among Asians have a very special meaning. They not only represent a token of welcoming a guest or visitor, but are also a form of salutation and spiritual invocation.

Many Asian languages have different levels of formality. The manner of greetings and the response, how one is greeted, also reflect one's age and social standing relative to the greeter in the society. It also varies from place to place depending upon the customs, religion, and the Western influence, reflecting the tremendous diversity of Asia itself.

Asians are quiet and soft-spoken people, who often like to maintain some distance with strangers, newly acquainted or casual contacts until they get to know you.

Body-touching varies from region to region and culture to culture. However, cross-gender touching is frowned



upon. Shaking hands or kissing a woman is not appropriate; and may be embarrassing and insulting to the women and her family which could be disastrous for your relationship. However, some Westernized woman may extend a hand - shaking hands with them is appropriate.

Nodding, sometimes with a smile, palms pressed against each other with fingers facing upward, a salute like gesture with palm facing the forehead, or a bow are widely practiced greeting gestures in different Asian cultures.

A same-gender handshake, embracing, or even kissing are signs of closeness and friendship in some cultures. However, a cross-gender public display of affection, even among husbands and wives is frowned upon.

Elders are highly revered and respected in Asian culture. Young ones should initiate the greeting. When greeting an elder or superior one bows and waits, until it is responded to, or a hand is extended to shake before returning to normal posture. Sometimes a smile or a nod is sufficient without formal gesture.

*Ni hao ma?* "how do you do?" is a common Chinese greeting. The Japanese usually only bow. However a business man in Japan may greet you with *Hanjimemashite*. Koreans may use several phrases, but most commonly, *Anyonghaseyo?* meaning "are you in peace?". A more casual Korean greeting might be *Annhyong haseyo*, also meaning "are you at peace". In the Philippines, a common greeting is *Saan Ka Pupunta?* "where are you going" and *Saan Ka galling* "where have you been?". A typical response is *Diyan land* "there only", or a more formal *Kumusta Kana* "how are you doing".



# Universal Cultural Greetings

## UNIVERSAL GREETING

Marhaba is a casual Hello, you may also be greeted with a more formal *Ahlan wasahlan* (roughly, "you are welcome in this place or nice to have you here"), *Sabah al Khair* (Good morning), or *Msa'a al Khair* (Good evening)

The *Namaste* is India's traditional greeting. One presses the palms together below the chin and says "*Namste*" (in the south Namaskaram). For your superior or to show respect, a slight bow is added. *Namaste* is a universal Hindu Greeting that can also be offered to Hindus in Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Far East, whereas, *Sikh* (pronounced Seekh) another religion from India, greet each other with *Sat Sri Akal*.

In Israel and throughout the world *Shalom* (Peace) is a universal Jewish greeting. It may be followed by *Ma Nishma?* (What's up?), *Ma Inyanim?* (what's happening?), or more formal *Ma Shlomcha?* (How are you?). Proper grammar for women using this phrase is *Ma Shalomlech?*

*Assalaamu Alaikum* is a unilateral declaration: meaning, peace be upon you. It is an Arabic term universally used by Muslims throughout the world to greet others. You can respond with a similar acknowledgement, *Walaikum assalam* (peace be upon you too). It is a common greeting among the Muslims in the Far East; South Asia, S. Central Asia; and throughout the Middle East.

*Salaam* or *Selamat* is used in Indonesia, and Khoda Hafiz (In God's Protection!) is a common parting phrase among Indian; Iranian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi Muslims.

